



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009

Doctor's Gift says 'Thank You'

CAMP LIBERTY — A new symbol of freedom and appreciation now greets Soldiers and visitors to the headquarters of Multi-National Division – Baghdad, after an unveiling ceremony in front of division headquarters here, Feb. 5.

Dr. Muayad Muslin Hamid al-Jaburri, an influential Iraqi cardiologist and humanitarian, donated the gold eagle-head statue to all the Soldiers of MND-B in admiration for their sacrifices while working to make Baghdad a safer place to live.

"The Eagle represents a little bit of mixed culture, knowing how important the eagle means to Americans and knowing that in the Arabic culture we have been putting eagles on top of the castles for thousands of years to show power and protection," said Jaburri.

The statue also symbolizes the basic rights Soldiers, Iraqi Security Forces and local civilians have been striving to spread across the nation.

"The eagle is a symbol of freedom," said 1st Lt. Hunter Wakeland, a native of Kennebunkport, Maine, who serves as a platoon leader with MND-B.



Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond (right), artist Laith Fattah al-Turk (center) and Dr. Muayad Muslin Hamid al-Jaburri unveil the new statue at Multi-National Division-Baghdad headquarters on Camp Liberty, Feb. 5, 2009. Photo by Sgt. DaleAnne Maxwell, MND-B.

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This Week in News ...

Transition Teams
Mentor Iraqi Troops

U.S. Marines Help
Build Water Canal



Press Briefing: Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin, MNC-I, Feb. 4

Reconstruction: The Latest Corps of Engineers News

AFN's Iraqi Freedom Minute: This Week's Broadcasts

Wheelchairs Donated in Sadr City

SADR CITY — Some entered Baghdad's Sadr City District Advisory Council compound Feb. 4 in small groups, while others came alone. They were a diverse group, former military men injured while fighting insurgents, others victims of Saddam Hussein's regime; the very old and the very young.

Their disabilities linked them to a common goal, the hope of receiving one of the 60 free wheelchairs being given out by Brad Blausner, founder of the charity 'Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids.'

Along with Capt. Scot Tebo, brigade surgeon for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team

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Master Sgt. Louis Carter, 321st Air Expeditionary Airlift Squadron combat aviation advisor, performs a pre-flight inspection on an Iraqi C-130E, Feb. 2, 2009. The C-130 was preparing to pick up Iraqi election ballot boxes. Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Beckham.

U.S. Airmen Aid in Iraqi Ballot Transport

SATHER AIR BASE — Members from the 321st Air Expeditionary Airlift Squadron did their part in assisting Iraq in the election process, Feb. 2.

While many servicemembers were watching the final moments of Super-bowl XLIII, Maj. Scott Volk, Capt. Chris Dickens, both C-130 evaluation pilots and aviation advisors for the Iraqi Air Force, and Master Sgt. Louis Carter, 321st AEAS combat aviation advisor, were preparing to board an Iraqi C-130E on its way to Mosul to pick up election ballot boxes from Iraq's recent elections.

"We all volunteered for this mission, we all knew it was a part of history," said Dickens, who is deployed from the 62nd Airlift Squadron at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark. "Today we will be on the airplane actively advising [the Iraqi aircrew] in case they have any issues that come up."

As advisors, these aircrew members have played a significant role in helping Iraq become an independent Air Force.

"Our primary role first and foremost is to train the Iraqi C-130 pilots. We also upgrade other crew positions," said Dickens. "We have upgraded a couple people to instructors. We also help them with their squadron programs. For example, we advise them on flight safety, standardization and evaluations and training."

These Airmen, who have already been deployed here for several months, said today was extra special because they were directly involved in Iraq becoming a democracy.

"It feels like you are actually making a difference today and this goes to us maybe getting home," said Carter, who is deployed from the 550th Special Operations Squadron at Kirtland AFB, N.M.

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JSS Awad Transferred to IP Control

JSS AWAD — While the ceremony here may have been small, the Iraqi Police (IP) took a huge step toward becoming a completely autonomous force as Joint Security Station Awad transferred to IP control, Feb. 4.

Soldiers from 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division–Baghdad, transferred Joint Security Station Awad to the IP in support of the recent security agreement implementation.

Although the station is small, with barely more than 100 IP, the transition was a visible milestone in the effort to create a safe, stable Iraq completely controlled by Iraqis.

"This security is felt throughout all Iraq," said IP Gen. Amad Ismael, commander of the Taji District Headquarters. "We are restoring Iraq's prosperity in spite of criminals who shed Iraqi blood. We are dusting ourselves off and moving on to accomplish the true dreams of Iraqi people."

The station was a dilapidated school, frequently used by insurgents to stage attacks before Coalition forces moved in. Although it's now a police station, the IP will eventually return it to the Ministry of Education.

Soldiers of the "Warrior" brigade created true, lasting friendships with the people of Awad, said Col. Todd McCaffrey, "Warrior" brigade commander.

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Moments in Time: Still Images from the Military's Best Photographers



A U.S. Soldier walks with two children in Basra, Jan. 20, 2009. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Andre N. McIntyre.



U.S. Army Soldiers tour Saint Elijah's Monastery in Mosul, Iraq, Jan. 23, 2009. Photo by Staff Sgt. JoAnn S. Makinano.



A player passes the ball during a friendly soccer game, Jan. 27, 2009. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zach Mott.